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Twenty-Sixth Report

**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS**

**(This report covers the period from
14 August through 20 August 1973)**

*This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the
Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.*

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Twenty-Sixth Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS*

(This report covers the week from
14 August through 20 August 1973)

The Key Points

- For the first time in a month, two new North Vietnamese combat infiltration groups--totalling an estimated 1,000 men--were observed moving southward in the infiltration pipeline.
- Since the 15 June effective date of the "second" ceasefire, almost 7,000 North Vietnamese personnel have started the infiltration trip south. Some 5,500 of these have been combat troops.
- North Vietnamese logistic activity is at a low to moderate rainy season level except in northern South Vietnam, where both military and civilian supply activities continue to be brisk.
- Combat activity was at a low level during the week in both South Vietnam and Laos.
- The Central Intelligence Agency believes that
no categorical evidence of new military shipments to North Vietnam from China or the USSR, but does show some military equipment which could have recently arrived in-country. The Department of Defense believes that some of the military equipment picked up in this photography almost certainly has arrived recently in North Vietnam.

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The Details

NOTE: This is the twenty-sixth in a series of reports detailing recently received evidence of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, (II) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

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I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

A. Personnel Infiltration and Redeployments

1. For the first time in almost a month, two new combat infiltration groups were observed traveling southward in the southern portion of the pipeline. These groups, which are destined for southern Laos, are estimated to have a complement of 500 troops each. In addition, fifteen small groups with a total of more than 400 civilian administrators--most of them traveling to South Vietnam's central coast--were observed for the first time.

2. As a result of these new detections, our estimate of the number of North Vietnamese who have started south since 15 June now stands at almost 7,000 personnel. Some 5,500 of these have been combat troops, while the remainder have been civilian and military specialists. Since the signing of the original ceasefire agreement on 27 January, more than 57,000 personnel have infiltrated south from North Vietnam. Of these, more than 32,000 started their journey since 27 January, while

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25X1 25,000 were in the system moving southward as of that date. (ANNEX B, [] contains a more detailed discussion of the information pertaining to infiltration which was received during the past week.)

B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies
North Vietnam

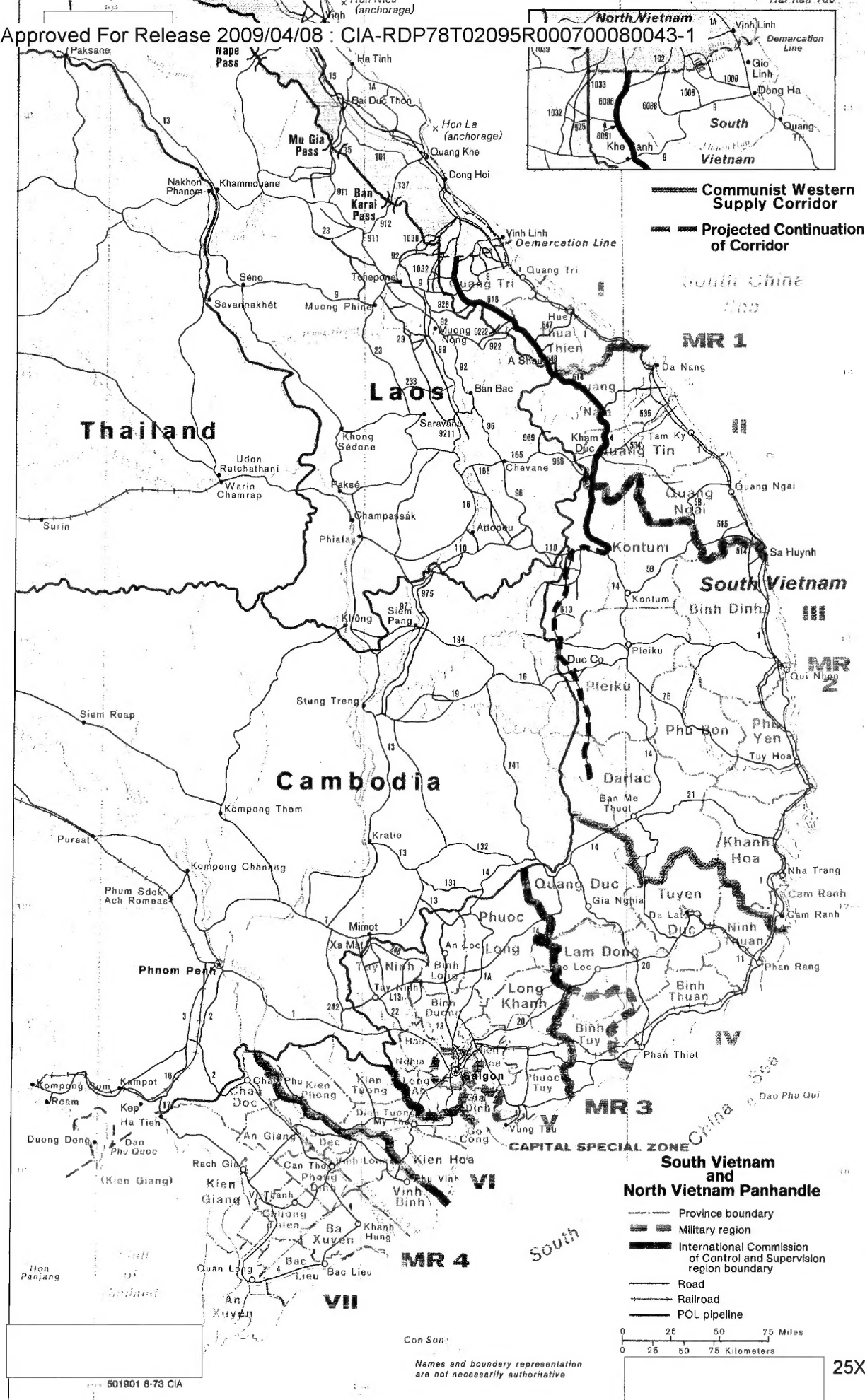
3. Logistic activity in the North Vietnam Panhandle was moderate during the reporting period and was again concentrated in the areas around Vinh and south from Quang Khe to the DMZ. On 11 August about 70 tons of ammunition were sent from a logistic unit west of Vinh to a storage area further south in Quang Binh Province. A series of reliable reports ending on 11 August indicated that some 1,600 tons of weapons and ammunition had been moved from Vinh to a logistic unit south of Quang Khe over an unspecified recent period. The cargo was transported south from Vinh via truck, barge and rail. Another reliable report indicated that on 17 August 45 tons of unidentified cargo was received at a storage facility south of Vinh.

4. Logistic movements also continued in the area between Quang Khe and the DMZ. On 11 and 12 August, 34 northbound and 50 southbound vehicles were observed crossing the Xuan Son Bridge southwest of Quang Khe. Other information received on 11 August indicated that a storage facility along the Gianh River had some 1,100 tons of material on hand, including about 825 tons of unspecified weapons and ammunition and 275 tons of foodstuffs. In other activity [] on 12 August over 200 tons of various types of ammunition were sent to a storage facility in southern Quang Binh Province. Finally, on 14 August a subordinate logistic unit operating in this area reportedly received 40 vehicles and dispatched 50 during the day.

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Laos

5. The movement of supplies in Laos remains very light, as heavy rains continue to restrict traffic



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flows. In northern Laos the North Vietnamese continue to maintain substantial supply caches, but there is little evidence of new logistic movements. According to a 10 August report, nearly 1,100 tons of different types of ammunition were in a storage area west of the Plaine des Jarres. Roads in the Plaine des Jarres area at present are generally in fair to poor condition and have been supporting only light traffic in recent weeks.

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6. In the southern Laos Panhandle, [redacted] on 12 August most of the roads in the area were in poor condition and were sustaining little if any vehicle traffic. No cargo shipments were observed during the period; some NVA units in the Panhandle, however, were continuing to engage in road reconstruction activity.

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South Vietnam

7. The pace of Communist logistic movements on the routes of the "western supply corridor" in northern South Vietnam is still quite high. Although there are scattered instances of supply units in this area being hindered by bad weather, substantial quantities of supplies are still moving. On 8 August one of the major logistic units operating along Route 548 in western GVN MR 1 had 63 cargo vehicles active in its area and was transporting 240 tons of supplies. Another report of the same day covering an unspecified area of western GVN MR 1 indicated that over 230 NVA vehicles were actively transporting unspecified cargo. A series of reports dated 10 and 11 August indicated that one of the major NVA storage depots on the western corridor had some 4,300 tons of cargo on hand as of those dates. According to a report of 14 August, another logistic unit on the western corridor had received nearly 1,600 tons of supplies over an unspecified recent period. The supplies included fuel, explosives and engineering equipment. On 14 August, 32 cargo trucks were detected on Route 548 north of A Chau, and there were 21 cargo vehicles in the same area on 16 August.

8. Elsewhere in northern South Vietnam, fragmentary indications point to continuing moderate levels

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of logistic activity. Sixty-five cargo vehicles were observed on Route 9 between Dong Ha and Khe Sanh on 19 August. Vehicular movement is also still being detected in the Cua Viet River area of northern Quang Tri Province where an estimated 40-50 supply vehicles are moving each day.

II. Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South Vietnam

9. In South Vietnam, the total number of communist-initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January, 15 June, and for the last week (14-20 Aug) are shown below:

<u>Military Region</u>	<u>Total Since 27 January "Ceasefire"</u>		<u>Total Since 15 June "Ceasefire"</u>		<u>Last Week (14-20 Aug)</u>	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
MR 1	1,143	3,991	118	632	10	84
MR 2	414	2,848	150	994	21	122
MR 3	507	3,521	105	945	7	89
MR 4	879	8,137	201	1,971	28	166
Totals	2,943	18,497	574	4,542	66 (78)	451 (506) <u>1/</u>

1/ Denotes totals of previous week.

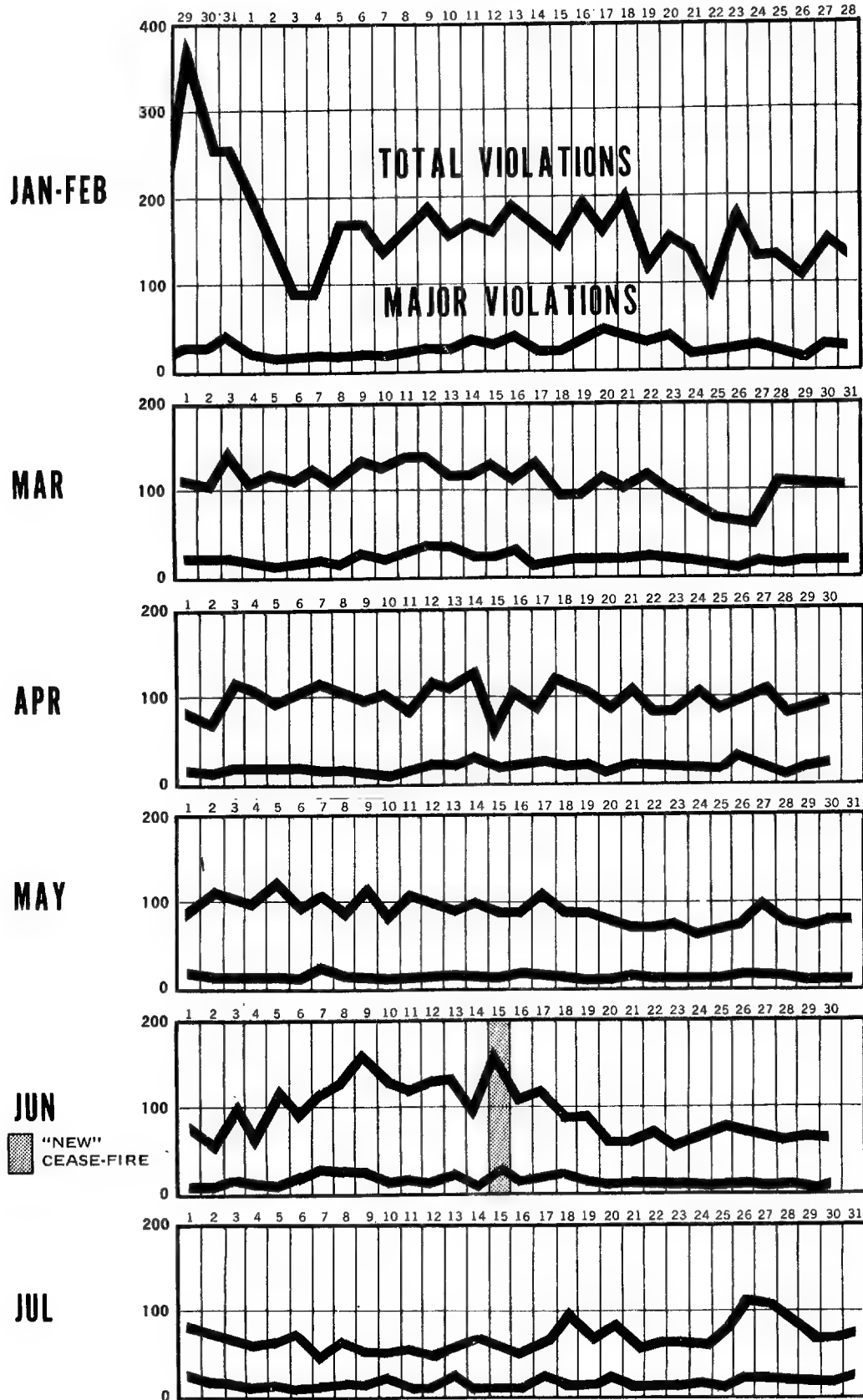
10. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the charts on the following pages, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion.

(See Reverse Side of Page)



CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

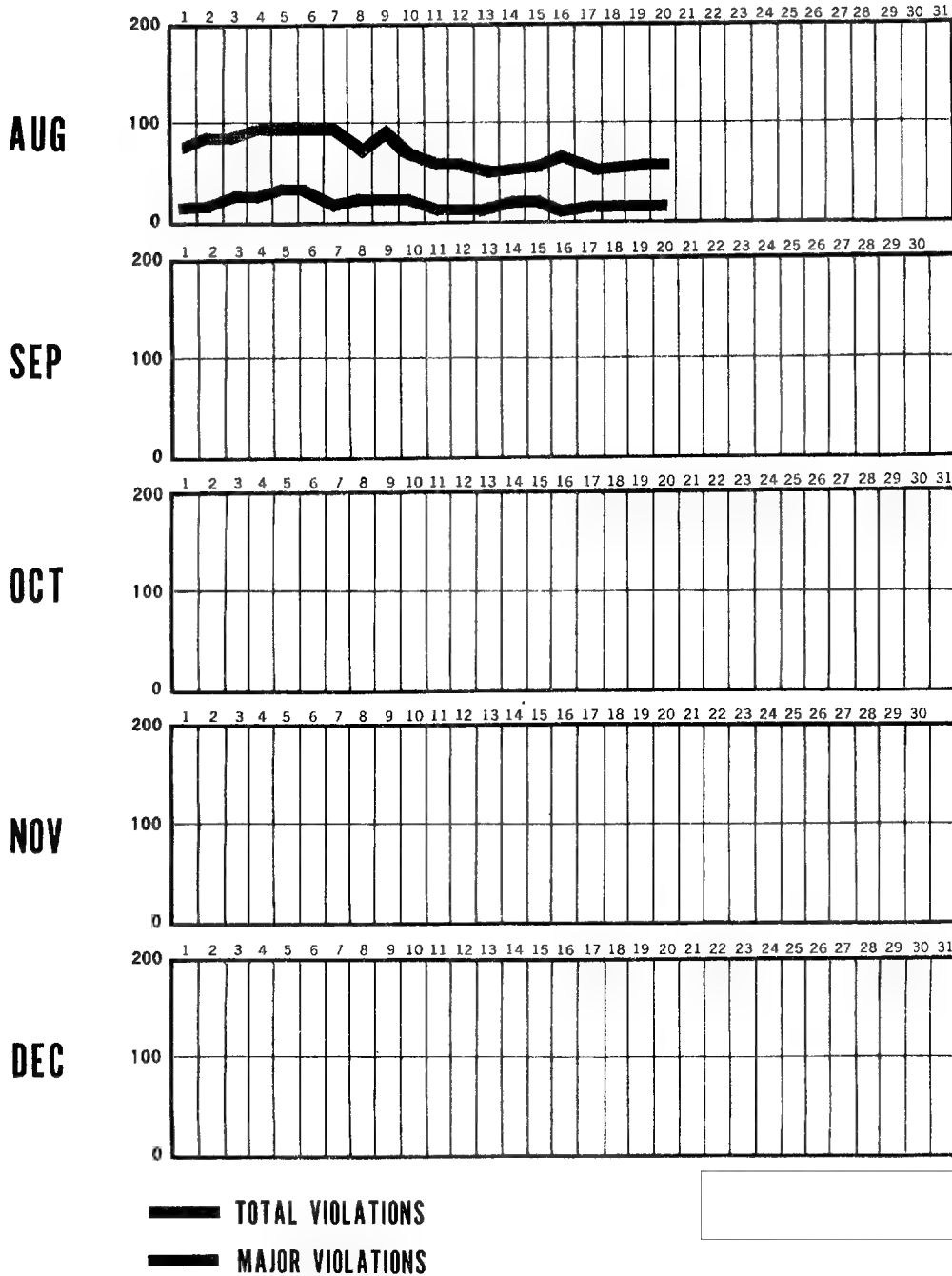
(28 JANUARY THROUGH 31 JULY 1973)





CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF

(1 AUGUST 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



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B. Laos

11. Communist-initiated combat activity in Laos continued at a low level during the reporting period. Enemy attacks continued in extreme south-eastern Military Region 2 in northern Laos resulting in the loss of positions held by two government village defense companies. The fate of approximately 556 military dependents and refugees from the area is not known. Elsewhere in Laos sporadic fighting was noted in Military Regions 3 and 4.

III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities in Indochina

Khmer Communists Continue to Prepare for Shelling of Phnom Penh

12. Despite last week's pullback of KC ground troops from forward positions around Phnom Penh, COMINT indicates the rebels remain intent on mounting a coordinated artillery barrage on the Capital in the very near future. Intercepted messages reflect continuing requests for and shipments of artillery weapons and ammunition to units in the Phnom Penh area. Much of the ordnance slated for use in an attack on Phnom Penh consists of weapons and ammunition recently captured from FANK. A 5 August intercept noted that during the month of July more than 1,000 tons of ammunition had been confiscated by the KC. In one of FANK's latest setbacks at Skoun north of the Capital, the Communists recovered two more 105 mm. howitzers, three armored cars, and "many" tons of ammunition, according to intercepted messages.

13. The KC, however, still have supply problems. Communications between command elements indicate that both the heavy U.S. bombing up to 15 August and bad weather have caused fairly severe transportation snags and shortages. In the days to come, the effects of the US bombing on KC logistic operations will probably diminish rapidly.

NVA Clashes with Khmer Communist Units in Southern Cambodia

14. Elements of the NVA 52nd Infantry Regiment, NVA 1st Division, continued their attempts during the week to secure NVA rear base areas in southern Cambodia against KC attacks. The commitment on 12 and 13 August of at least two battalions of the regiment comes at a time of flaring ethnic animosity precipitated by rice and ammunition shortages and mounting intransigence on both sides. The North Vietnamese apparently view the situation seriously enough to warrant direct control of the battalions by the Division headquarters, which has ordered the units to secure portions of the base areas and to assure that NVA/VC supply flows continue unimpeded.

15. This confrontation between major NVA and KC units could, unless it is ended, cause difficulties for those NVA units in South Vietnam's MR 4 which are dependent upon Rear Service elements and secure base areas in Cambodia. Long unchallenged, the North Vietnamese are now faced with an increasingly aggressive KC who have their own resupply problems. Efforts are currently underway to resolve the situation amicably, but if the efforts should fail, and if the North Vietnamese are forced to commit more main force units to rear base security, their capabilities in GVN MR 4 (and possibly also MR 3) could be significantly diminished. KC capabilities have also been affected by the confrontation since several KC units have been pulled out of the Takeo area to join the fray.

New Satellite Photography of North Vietnam

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Preliminary analysis is now underway, and coverage of the main target areas--major transport routes, key ports, and important industrial and military facilities--appears fairly good.

17. The Central Intelligence Agency believes that the new photography provides no categorical evidence of new military shipments to North Vietnam from China or the USSR, but the photography does show some military equipment which could have recently arrived in-country. A number of armored vehicles and artillery pieces were observed near Phuc Yen northwest of Hanoi at a rail yard known to have been used prior to the January ceasefire as a military equipment transloading point. Poor quality photography [] showed only 6 probable armored vehicles at this facility. Over 200 field artillery pieces, including 130 mm guns and 85/100 mm AAA pieces, were also observed at a newly identified artillery park 40 miles southwest of Hanoi.

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18. The Department of Defense believes that given the past history of the facility at Phuc Yen where the military equipment was located, and given the lack of evidence to the contrary, the equipment photographed at Phuc Yen was newly arrived in Vietnam. As such it represents the first detected delivery of military equipment--except for six MI-10 helicopters delivered by Soviet freighters in April--since the 28 January ceasefire agreement was signed, and indicates that Hanoi is continuing to receive military assistance.

19. Activity was fairly high on the rail lines which were covered in the new photography. The two main rail yards at Hanoi and Dong Dang (on the Chinese border) were mostly covered by clouds, and sections of the line itself were also cloud-covered. As a result, our count of rolling stock on the line was lower than the figure obtained from [] coverage. On the Chinese side of the border, however, there were about 450 pieces of rolling stock, 60 percent more than observed []. The number of vehicles in the parks between Hanoi and Dong Dang remained at approximately the same levels observed in

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[] when nearly 5,000 vehicles were seen. Moderate levels of maritime activity continue at Haiphong, and at the several small ports and anchorages on the southern North Vietnamese coast. Traffic on Route 1A in the southern Panhandle was moderately heavy, and a convoy of 256 trucks was observed headed south near Quang Khe. Another southbound convoy of 60 trucks was seen on Route 101 south of Dong Hoi.

Public North Vietnamese Statement on Military
Conscription

20. The North Vietnamese press and radio announced in mid-August that, despite the ceasefire, military conscription must continue. The pronouncement--the longest official commentary on induction since 27 January--may simply have been prompted by inefficiencies in the conscription program, which has continued in 1973 but at a sharply reduced rate in comparison with 1972. It seems more likely, however, that Hanoi is preparing both the populace and the conscription agencies for the fall induction drive which would normally begin in September.

21. The 1973 fall induction program could be a key indication of North Vietnamese intentions for 1974, since any Communist plans for major sustained offensive operations would probably be accompanied by an upsurge in September inductions. Allowing for a normal training cycle, plus infiltration travel time, fall inductees would be available for commitment in the early spring of next year.

Chinese Merchant Ship to Transport Rice to
South Vietnam

22. A merchant ship of Chinese registry is scheduled to transport rice to the Cua Viet River area of Quang Tri Province during the last half of August. Communications intercepted on 13 August from a North Vietnamese rear services element stated that a 1,000 ton Hung Ch'i type ship transporting rice would arrive in the Cua Viet area on 15-20 August. The message did not identify the ship by

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name. Although Chinese vessels routinely call at North Vietnamese ports, this would be the first call in a Communist-controlled area of South Vietnam.

Rivers in Northeast Cambodia Supporting Heavy
Volume of Northward Bound NVA Supply Traffic

23. Communist intercepted messages indicate that North Vietnamese river-borne resupply activity in the Stung Treng area of northeast Cambodia included the movement of over 800 tons of cargo in the period 8-14 August. Most of the cargo--a daily average of over 100 tons--was moving northward, and it consisted primarily of foodstuffs (86 percent of the total) and petroleum. No movements of military equipment or munitions were observed. Much of the food and POL was probably collected in Cambodia or purchased in black markets in the southern part of South Vietnam. It is headed upriver toward Laos and possibly the Communist-controlled areas of the central highlands of South Vietnam via the Mekong, Tonle Kong and Tonle San Rivers. We cannot estimate the total volume of such shipments in recent months. In the near future, however, supply movements over these rivers may become increasingly difficult for the NVA. Aerial photography [] showed the Tonle Kong to be near flood stage, and communications intelligence has indicated that some storage facilities in low lying areas near the rivers will be inundated if the waters rise much further.

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ANNEX B

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North Vietnamese
Personnel to the South

1. During the past week, two regular combat infiltration groups--5061 and 5062--were initially detected with unspecified strengths in the border area between Laos and South Vietnam's Quang Tri Province. These groups, both of which probably contain replacement troops for North Vietnamese combat units in southern Laos, were detected on 19 and 20 August, but are believed to have started south about three weeks ago. They are the first combat infiltration groups noted traveling to southern Laos during the current wet season and mark the first detections of any combat infiltration groups since late July, when several groups were observed en route to VC MR 5 on South Vietnam's central coast. With the detection of Groups 5061 and 5062--and the resultant gap-filling of Group 5060--our estimate of the number of North Vietnamese combat troops who have started south since 1 July has increased by 1,500 men to some 4,600 troops.

2. Fifteen small groups containing some 425 civilian administrators also were observed for the first time in the central portion of the Laotian Panhandle. The designators of these groups indicate that, with two exceptions, they are all destined for VC MR 5. All fifteen special-purpose groups probably departed North Vietnam in early August.

3. Over the past several weeks, North Vietnamese rear services elements in southern Laos have reported the southward movement of several thousand personnel, but no infiltration group designators were observed in conjunction with these people. In order to avoid possible duplication with previously-observed groups, these personnel were not included

in our infiltration estimate. New evidence, however, now indicates that at least some of these personnel belong to NVA combat and support units already in the Laotian Panhandle, and either are returning from North Vietnam after a period of leave or are replacements for troops being sent north for rest. As such, they represent a rotation of personnel rather than new infiltration. Thus far, there has been no evidence to suggest that the North Vietnamese are planning to redeploy a significant portion of their combat troops from southern Laos to North Vietnam in the near future.

4. Table 1 below shows the infiltration of combat troops since 1 September 1972, by destination, and Table 2 summarizes total infiltration starts--including specialists--since 1 January 1973.

Table 1

Infiltration Starts: Combat Troops
Leaving North Vietnam for the South,
by Destination*

	<u>1 Sep 1972-30 Jun 1973**</u>	<u>1 Jul-20 Aug 1973</u>
Total	<u>94,000</u>	<u>4,600</u>
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	33,000 (CIA) , 36,000 (DOD)	0
MR 5	9,000	3,100
B-3 Front	14,000 (CIA) , 11,000 (DOD)	0
COSVN	26,000	0
Southern Laos and MR 559	12,000	1,500

* This table includes only combat infiltration groups, and omits special-purpose groups. There are minor differences between the DOD and the CIA concerning the number of personnel destined for specific areas listed on this table. Where such differences exist both the CIA and the DOD estimates are given.

** For accounting purposes, we arbitrarily define the "infiltration year" as beginning on 1 September, which roughly coincides with the start of the dry season along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the Laos Panhandle each year.

Table 2

Number of Personnel Entering the Pipeline
Since 1 January 1973

	<u>Total^{1/}</u>	<u>Special-Purpose</u>
January	20,000	1,600
February	10,200	2,100
March	3,250	2,250
April	1,925	1,200
May	7,175	300
June 1-15	825	325
June 16-30	1,375	375
July 1-15	1,900	175
July 16-31	1,750	425
August 1-6	1,925	425
August 7-13	0	0
August 14-20	0	0

^{1/} Including gap-filled groups, except groups 7001-7009 and 5057. Assuming that these groups departed after 1 January, about 5,000 combat troops would be added to the infiltration starts shown above.

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